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YOU DON'T SAY...

"Do not, I repeat, do not give in to the terrorist actions of criminal leftists and the shreds of human debris that follow them."

Confederate monument supporter Mark Sweat, speaking at a public hearing on moving state Capitol monuments.

THE INSIDER, 3/21/18

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News Summary

Elections Board

The four Democrats and four Republicans on the new state elections board went 'round and 'round Wednesday, casting tie vote after tie vote, as they looked for the board's ninth member. But then they fell into an agreement to nominate former Supreme Court Chief Justice Burley Mitchell and Damon Circosta, executive director of the A.J. Fletcher Foundation. Gov. Roy Cooper selected Circosta, who could be the tie-breaking vote on the Board of Elections and Ethics Enforcement, late Wednesday. The wrangling on the way to agreement on two nominees reflected the long power struggle between Cooper, a Democrat, and the Republican-run legislature, which moved to change the board after Cooper won office in 2016. Cooper has sued over the changes three times, most

recently this month.

The board plays a major role in where, when and how North Carolina votes and who has control over investigating ethics complaints against lawmakers and campaigns. The law passed last month calls for a nine-member board. The first eight members are required to choose two nominees who are not registered with either major party. Those names are passed on to Cooper, who will pick one.

Board Chairman Andy Penry said after the meeting he thought it went "pretty well." But Dallas Woodhouse, the NC Republican Party executive director, said Republicans will talk about asking the legislature to consider a constitutional amendment to allow "a fully bipartisan board," with an even number of Democrats and Republicans. Republicans on the board wanted to open the application process for a ninth member for another week as a way to seek interest from around the state and not just Raleigh's political insiders. Penry said the law didn't give the board enough time to solicit more names. Woodhouse said Democrats "rejected an open and transparent process," and it was clear they were going to adjourn the meeting unless they got what they wanted. "That's the power play they had," Woodhouse said, "but we have one, too."

Legislators would have to vote to put a constitutional amendment on the ballot. Woodhouse said it would win easy approval from voters, who would overwhelmingly support something called "bipartisan." The elections board settled on Mitchell and Circosta after Republicans rejected a Democratic slate that included Circosta and Democrats rejected a Republican slate that included Mitchell.

Gerry Cohen, former head of the bill drafting division in the legislature, got votes from both sides at times but was dropped from the final slate. Cohen said he had been asked to apply and changed his party registration from Democrat to unaffiliated on Tuesday to make himself eligible. "I didn't know if I was everyone's first choice or everyone's third choice," he said. "I'm kind of embarrassed, actually."

Before he joined the A.J. Fletcher Foundation, Circosta ran the N.C. Center for Voter Education. John Lewis, a Republican elections board member and former NC GOP attorney, said in an early round of voting that he couldn't support Circosta. "We don't believe he's going to be an independent voice," Lewis said later. "He'd be in with the Democrats." Circosta listed on his resume work as a legal intern for Republican U.S. Sen. John McCain in 2002. He also worked for Democrat Barack Obama's election in 2008. In an interview, Circosta rejected the suggestion he'd be a reliable vote for Democratic positions. "That's categorically not true," he said, noting that he pushed for redistricting reform when Democrats controlled the legislature and worked on elections changes that had Republican support. Circosta said if he's selected, he'd want to "make sure the election system is accessible, secure, efficient, and above all, fair." (Lynn Bonner, THE NEWS & OBSERVER, 3/21/18)

Broadband Recommendations

Resources: [League Report](#)

With more than 600,000 North Carolina residents lacking any high-speed internet service, municipal leaders pushed Wednesday for state policy changes designed to create public-private partnerships in which local governments build broadband infrastructure and lease it to private internet providers. The regulatory change is part of a House bill that's been collecting dust in the Senate Rules Committee for nearly a year, and an N.C. League of Municipalities report released Wednesday makes similar proposals.

Rep. John Szoka, R-Cumberland, and Rep. Kevin Corbin, R-Macon, are co-sponsors of House Bill 68 (the "BRIGHT Futures Act") and joined municipal leaders for a news conference detailing the report. "I'm hopeful that (Senate leaders) will take that bill as a basis and look at this report and add to it," he said. "We need to take action in the upcoming short session." Supporters of the bill say cities, towns and counties could make use of what's known as "dark fiber" -- additional capacity in existing infrastructure that government uses to connect traffic lights, schools and public facilities.

The League of Municipalities study found that the public-private partnership model is "probably the best way to extend it to the hard to reach places in our state," said Erin Wynia, author of the report. "Frankly, this challenge won't be met solely by the public sector or solely by the private sector." The report also found potential for the state's electric cooperatives to help by leasing their infrastructure, but current law doesn't allow electric easements to be used for telecommunications purposes. Another recommendation is a "dig once" policy requiring government agencies to install broadband conduits (essentially pipes that can house fiber internet lines) during other construction projects, putting the infrastructure in place for future leases to internet providers. The League is also calling for a state grant fund to help local governments build broadband infrastructure; Wynia said the report doesn't include a suggested funding amount but that Minnesota and New York have grant programs that could serve as models.

The report doesn't, however, call for policy changes that would allow local governments to both build and operate broadband internet networks -- something the city of Wilson did before the legislature blocked future programs. That legislation was strongly supported by telecom companies that were concerned about public-sector competition, but Wynia said the Wilson program worked because the city owns and operates its electric system -- an unusual characteristic. "We believe that that model is not likely to succeed in most areas of the state because of the unique circumstances," she said. Szoka said he was careful to make sure his legislation "wasn't stepping on the toes of private business. ... I don't think there's any city that wants to be responsible for collecting monthly fees for an HBO subscription or anything else."

In Wednesday's news conference, municipal leaders highlighted the importance of broadband to education and economic development in their communities. Jacksonville Mayor Pro Tem Michael Lazzara said he was "on the verge of moving our company ... because I simply was stagnated by the broadband we had." Jackie Hampton is the town clerk in Bolton, a town of about 700 people in Columbus County where many residents can't get reliable internet in their homes. "We have students who have to choose between going to lunch or going to a library or computer center to complete their homework because they have no access" at home, she said, adding that the local senior center parking lot is often full of people sitting in their cars to take advantage of the Wifi. Broadband, Lazzara said, "is no more a luxury than access to roads, water, sewer and electricity." (Colin Campbell, THE INSIDER, 3/22/18)

Boswell Misidentification

A North Carolina legislator misidentified herself as a registered nurse until recently, when the state Board of Nursing contacted her and asked her to stop. Rep. Beverly Boswell, R-Dare, is a medical assistant and phlebotomist -- someone who's trained to draw blood -- who was first elected in 2016 to represent NC House District 6. A member of the NC House health committee, Boswell has filed bills to allow chiropractors to conduct physical examinations, establish life at conception and exempt some eye surgeries from the state's permitting laws, among other health-related bills.

Boswell identified herself as a registered nurse on her campaign website and Facebook page until mid-March, when the N.C. Board of Nursing, responding to a complaint, asked her to stop doing so, board spokesman David Kalbacker said on Tuesday. "Rep. Boswell is not a licensed nurse nor has she ever been a licensed nurse," Kalbacker said in an email.

Boswell corrected her campaign website after speaking with Kalbacker last week, he said. But, until Tuesday, Boswell had not corrected her campaign Facebook page. "Working her way up from struggling single mother to registered nurse and Dare County Commissioner, Beverly rejects the liberal notions of victim-hood and government dependency," the page said Tuesday morning.

The misidentification is an issue for the board because the nursing profession is regulated by the state government. Those hoping to become a registered nurse in North Carolina must attain an associate degree in the field -- usually a two-year process -- and then pass a test to acquire a nursing license. Phlebotomists, meanwhile, aren't required to obtain a license in North Carolina and the practice is far less regulated. However, many employers require phlebotomists to obtain

certification through a national professional organization.

In an interview with The News & Observer Tuesday afternoon, Boswell said she was unaware of the mistake until contacted by the nursing board. She said the registered nurse job title was included online because a campaign volunteer misunderstood her job. "Anytime you put on a uniform and go in a doctor's office people assume you're a nurse or doctor and you have to correct and correct and correct," Boswell said. She called the misidentification a "non-story" and "non-issue." It's unclear how long Boswell described herself online as a registered nurse.

The nursing board's outreach to Boswell marked the second time this week that someone has taken issue with her Facebook presence. Boswell garnered attention on Monday after she posted on Facebook about her phone conversation with a school leader who held an assembly on the day of the national school walkout when thousands of students left classrooms across America to protest gun violence. She referred to students as "Tide pod" eaters and suggested the school leader was allowing students to run the school. (Paul A. Specht, THE NEWS & OBSERVER, 3/21/18)

Registration Challenge

Resources: [Complaint](#)

The Mecklenburg County Board of Elections will hold a hearing on April 3 to examine a complaint filed concerning the voter registration of Brandon Lofton, a Democrat running for House District 104. According to WBTV in Charlotte, the board voted unanimously to hold a hearing earlier this week. The challenge, filed by Robert Diamond, alleges that while Lofton changed the address on his voter registration to a house he was under contract to buy, he did not actually live there. According to WBTV, Lofton said Diamond's claims are "baseless" and he has "no doubt it will be dismissed quickly."

Diamond's complaint is 47 pages long and includes numerous photos of the new address -- 921 Dacavin Drive in Charlotte -- with a "for sale" sign in front of it and a realtor's lock on the front door. According to the complaint, Lofton changed his address on Feb. 19, but on Feb. 23 -- four days after he updated his registration -- a "for sale" sign was still in front of the house and "no furniture or any evidence of habitation" was seen at the house. The complaint includes a "daily tracking log" from Feb. 22 to Feb. 28, detailing the comings and goings at both the Dacavin Drive residence, and Lofton's previously listed address, 4308 Jasmin Way Drive.

While the requirement for a candidate to live in a district for at least a year prior to running for office has been waived by a federal court, anyone who registers to vote at an address must reside there. Diamond, a former Republican candidate for state Senate, notes in his complaint that fraudulently or falsely filling out a voter registration form is a felony. Lofton is the only Democrat challenging incumbent Rep. Andy Dulin, R-Mecklenburg, in a competitive district. It's unclear if the Democratic Party would be allowed to field a replacement candidate if the elections board disqualifies Lofton. (Lauren Horsch, THE INSIDER, 3/22/18)

Judicial Primaries

North Carolina's primaries are just seven weeks away, but it's still not clear if they'll include votes for local judges. A three-judge panel at the U.S. Fourth Circuit Court of Appeals in Richmond, Virginia, heard arguments Tuesday over whether those primaries can go forward this year. Lawyers for Democrats and Republicans argued over the constitutionality of a 2017 state law that canceled judicial primaries. Republican lawmakers enacted the law by overriding a veto by Democratic Gov. Roy Cooper. Democrats sued, arguing the law violated their freedom to associate in picking judge candidates.

The full case goes to trial in June. On Tuesday, lawyers argued over whether a federal judge was right in January to temporarily block part of the law. That judge ordered primaries for statewide appeals court and supreme court judges to go forward but canceled primaries for district judges. Last month, the appeals court panel allowed the full law to take effect until it could weigh in.

For the Democrats, John Wallace argued that without primaries, anyone could run with whatever party affiliation they want. "The voters are not going to have the information to know whether or not those persons are nominees of the Democratic Party or pretenders," Wallace said. "That creates a situation in which we have voter confusion."

On behalf of the Republican lawmakers, lawyer Martin Warf argued that eliminating primaries doesn't take away a party's right to nominate candidates. They can do so through caucuses, for example, and then publicize their choices. "The parties can, and always do, have the ability under the administrative code in North Carolina to take, to give out placards that feature the faces and names of their nominees," Warf said. "Those are fine to take into the ballot booth with you. The parties have, to my knowledge, always done that."

A ruling on whether district judge primaries should go forward this year is expected soon. (David Boraks, WFAE NEWS, 3/21/18)

School Safety

Five weeks after a shooting at a Florida high school killed 17 people, North Carolina lawmakers gathered Wednesday to begin devising legislation to improve security at schools across the state. House Speaker Tim Moore appointed the House Select Committee on School Safety days after the shooting at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Fla. On Wednesday, he told committee members their task is a difficult but vital one.

"Threats to our schools are an appalling reality that we have to confront," Moore said. "You in this committee are being tasked with making decisions on behalf of the children who might feel scared to go to school. Students are asking their loved ones if they're safe if their classrooms are a place that they can learn and be free of fear. We owe it to our students in North Carolina to make schools a space where students and educators can excel and not have to worry about other matters."

Local and state law enforcement officials spent much of the morning updating lawmakers on efforts already in place to make schools safer, such as installing panic buttons in school offices, giving authorities access to school floor plans creating an app for students to report potential threats.

"Keeping schools safe is not a one-size-fits-all proposition," said Kym Martin, executive director of the North Carolina Center for Safer Schools, which was created in the wake of the December 2012 mass shooting at Sandy Hook Elementary School in Connecticut. "There's not one single measure you can put into place that will magically transform a school into the sanctuary for learning that our students deserve."

Elliott Smith, acting special agent in charge of the State Bureau of Investigation, said a gun safety group has reported that a school shooting has occurred once a week, on average, across the U.S. in the past five years. On Tuesday, a high school student in Maryland shot two of his classmates before being shot by a school resource officer. Bomb threats Tuesday also locked down some schools in Wake Forest and led to an evacuation at Halifax Community College.

Jim Deni, a psychology professor at Appalachian State University and president of the North Carolina School Psychologists Association, told lawmakers they need to provide more mental health support, noting that about 20 percent of people have mental health problems and that school counselors and psychologists are overwhelmed. "We have to have a balanced approach between psychological safety and physical safety," Deni said.

Amid the talk about improving mental health, Rep. MaryAnn Black, a Durham Democrat, said most people with mental illnesses will never be violent. "As we move forward, I hope we're also going to have a discussion about what needs to be done to protect the schools from guns being brought," she added.

Legislators heard from students such as Riley Barnes, Clayton High School's junior class president, who asked for more support for the SPK UP NC app that allows students to anonymously report school safety concerns. She told lawmakers "to take the necessary measures to ensure the safety that my peers and I are entitled to."

"It is an undeniable fundamental right that precautions are taken to ensure that I do not go through my school days in fear," Barnes said. "My high school career should be spent worrying about the SAT, college applications and what prom dress color I want and juggling my AP classes."

The committee ended the meeting by compiling a list of ideas it should study further, including allowing armed security guards who aren't police officers at schools, reviewing the mental health system and banning bump stocks. When no legislators brought up the idea of arming teachers, several Democrats said they wanted to make it known that they're against the concept.

"I could very easily see a situation where a teacher is intimidated by a student and something goes wrong and somebody ends up dead or severely injured," said Rep. Rodney Moore, D-Mecklenburg. (Laura Leslie, WRAL NEWS and T. Keung Hui, THE NEWS & OBSERVER, 3/21/18)

Residency Challenge

A Currituck County voter is challenging Richard James' qualifications to run for the state Senate seat in newly drawn District 1, claiming the Democratic candidate is not a district resident. Donna Steigelman, of Aydlett, filed the residency challenge against James on March 12, alleging that James resides in Chapel Hill, not Winton in Hertford County. Steigleman filed her complaint with the N.C. State Board of Elections and Ethics Enforcement. If the allegations in Steigelman's complaint are correct, James would live in Senate District 23, not Senate District 1. The N.C. Constitution requires candidates for state legislative office to reside in the districts they want to represent.

James, vice president of Alfiniti, an aluminum tube manufacturing company in Winton, filed as a Democratic candidate for the open Senate District 1 seat last month. Also filing for the seat were Washington County Commissioner Cole Phelps, a fellow Democrat, and two Republicans: state Rep. Bob Steinburg, R-Chowan, and Clark Twiddy, a businessman from Dare County. (Jon Hawley, THE (Elizabeth City) DAILY ADVANCE, 3/21/18)

Confederate Statues

State law doesn't allow Confederate statues to be moved from the Capitol grounds in Raleigh to a Civil War battlefield, speakers at a public hearing told a state committee Wednesday. Support for keeping the monuments in Raleigh rather than moving them, as Gov. Roy Cooper's administration has proposed, dominated the hour-long hearing. The committee will consider the public hearing comments, written comments, and input from outside experts and historians as it discusses the petition to relocate three statues to Bentonville Battlefield in Johnston County. A 2015 state law puts strict limits on when public monuments can be moved. When they are relocated, they can be moved only to places of similar prominence. Cooper proposed moving the monuments last year after a violent white supremacist rally in Charlottesville, Va., that left one woman dead. In the months since the rally, cities around the country have removed Confederate statutes from prominent places.

People who identified themselves as leaders of Confederate heritage groups turned out Wednesday to tell Historical Commission members they shouldn't move the statues. Many others said their ancestors fought for the South in the Civil War. "Those are North Carolinians that are honored on the state grounds," said Gary Williamson of Snow Camp. "Those monuments mean everything to me. We will fight until hell freezes over. Then we will fight on ice."

Those who want the statues moved said they are monuments to a pro-slavery past. Winifred Richardson of Knightdale said walking past the monuments "turns my stomach." The state shouldn't have monuments to traitors, she said. The Historical Commission is on pace to make a decision about

the monuments by the end of May, said Chairman David Ruffin. (Lynn Bonner, THE NEWS & OBSERVER, 3/21/18)

Trafficking Fight

As part of a sharpened campaign to combat human trafficking, North Carolina law enforcement officers and social service providers have urged people to keep their eyes and ears open for signs. One new sign they hope people will pay attention to will be inside liquor stores across the state. "No one should be forced, deceived, or pressured into work or sex acts," reads a sign posted Wednesday at the ABC Store in Cameron Village in Raleigh. The sign directs readers to a confidential hotline number that anyone can call or text to report suspicious activity or to seek help. "Human trafficking is a crime that lives in the shadows and for us to beat it we really have to shine a bright light on it," Attorney General Josh Stein said at a news conference inside the liquor store. "Awareness is really how we are going to beat human trafficking."

In 2017, the National Human Trafficking Hotline received more than 900 calls from North Carolina. There were 258 human trafficking cases brought by law enforcement and more than 1,200 victims and survivors identified last year in this state, according to Stein. The signs in the liquor stores and other establishments licensed by the ABC will serve two purposes, Stein said. "These signs will let victims know there is help on the other end of a phone call and help educate the public so we can look for the telltale signs of trafficking," he said.

A law adopted in 2017 by the North Carolina General Assembly requires the signs to be placed in liquor stores. Other states such as California, Texas and Oregon have taken similar actions targeting liquor stores because people at risk for coercion into the sex industry might be more likely to be in a liquor store than somewhere like a post office or some other public space. People promoting prostitution also are likely to go to liquor stores and perhaps get the message that North Carolina law enforcement officers and other organizations are taking a strong stance against such activity. Signs also will be posted at truck stops, rest areas, welcome centers, job centers and emergency rooms across the state. (Anne Blythe, THE NEWS & OBSERVER, 3/21/18)

Pipeline Ruling

As the Atlantic Coast Pipeline doubles down on slashing trees on hundreds of private properties in North Carolina, a federal judge has taken the unusual step of barring the energy consortium from clearing trees on two rural homesteads. U.S. District Judge Terrence Boyle said the interstate pipeline developer must first pay the two landowners before its chainsaw crews can enter their properties. The ruling comes as the planned 600-mile natural gas project, which is already more than a year behind schedule, is running up against deadlines that could add months to the construction timeline. Led by Charlotte's Duke Energy and Richmond's Dominion Energy, the Atlantic Coast Pipeline plans to bring vast supplies of natural gas to North Carolina from fracking operations in Pennsylvania and West Virginia.

The pipeline developers say they face a March 31 deadline to cut down trees before the start of the nesting season for migratory birds in Eastern North Carolina. Anticipating delays, the Atlantic Coast Pipeline last Thursday asked for a six-week federal extension, until May 15, to buy time and get the tree-cutting out of the way so workers can spend the summer and autumn trenching and laying pipe. If granted an extension, the pipeline company has vowed to visually survey every tree for nests and eggs, promising to avoid chopping down bird-occupied trees until the newly hatched fledglings have flown away.

In last week's private property dispute, Boyle rejected the Atlantic Coast Pipeline's arguments that its schedules and corporate priorities are in the public interest and should take precedence over the concerns of the local landowners. In his decision Friday, the judge was unmoved by the pipeline developers' urgent plea that they must begin cutting trees as soon as possible, or risk blowing the deadline and being forced to delay construction on the \$6 billion project until next winter. Boyle ruled that Enfield township fire chief Ronnie Locke and Marvin Winstead Jr., a 67-year-old Nash County

farmer, presented a compelling case that the Atlantic Coast Pipeline's landmen were uncommunicative or deceptive in their dealings, and the facts will need to be sorted out at trial, if Locke and Winstead don't choose to settle with the company. (John Murawski, THE NEWS & OBSERVER, 3/21/18)

Remote Healthcare

Members of a committee examining access to care for people in rural North Carolina hit the road last week, bringing lobbyists, lawmakers and legislative staff to Columbus County, two hours southeast of Raleigh, for a hearing. Three members of the Committee on Access to Healthcare in Rural North Carolina held their third meeting at the Columbus Regional Healthcare System hospital in Whiteville, pop. 5,509, the administrative seat of a county with only about 61 people per square mile.

"Whiteville is a very unique place in that it is a very rural community, still has a very traditional rural-based economy, but it is a community that still is somewhat vibrant," said committee co-chair Rep. David Lewis, R-Harnett. "So we thought this would let us see the challenges that are faced by even a more successful or more wealthy community. Certainly, if this hospital faces them then one in a poorer community will have more challenges."

Committee members heard formal presentations from the head of hospitals in Columbus, Robeson and Scotland counties, all facilities serving primarily rural populations. The three counties consistently rank at the very bottom of annual county health rankings, and each has some of the highest rates of poverty in the state. The three hospital CEOs talked through their telehealth initiatives, the challenges of recruiting and keeping health care providers, and emergency departments jammed with behavioral health patients. The presentations were followed by a relatively freewheeling lunchtime discussion with the hospital leaders, something usually not allowed for in an ordinary hearing. The CEOs discussed what they need to survive in an increasingly consolidated and competitive health care marketplace marked by non-paying and uninsured patients, decreasing reimbursements from commercial insurance plans, and uncertainty facing governmental payers such as Medicaid and Medicare. "We're serious about trying to make a difference and improve access to health care," Lewis told the CEOs. (Rose Hoban, NC HEALTH NEWS, 3/21/18)

Massage Rules

Hands on Health in Cary is one of the hundreds of independent massage therapy businesses around the state. They boast a clientele as young as 10 months old and as old as 80. But as the state tries to crack down on a growing problem, these massage therapy pros are concerned they'll be caught in the crossfire. "We're a small business," said Laura Ford, one of the 15 licensed massage therapists here specializing in medical massage, orthopedic, or injury-repair touch therapy. "It needs to be a place where a person can feel comfortable letting go and feel safe," Ford explained from one of the company's six treatment rooms.

It's a serious business of stress and pain relief - but don't call it a massage parlor. "Parlor is not a word to use with a massage-therapy practice," Ford said. "You will not find a legitimate massage therapy practice that uses that word."

It's those unscrupulous parlors - many of them operating in the shadows of rural North Carolina - that the state is cracking down on. In 2017, there were 258 cases of human trafficking; it's a form of slavery where victims are forced to work or perform sex acts - some of it done under the guise of a massage business. Last summer, state lawmakers passed a new law imposing tougher penalties for human traffickers as well as new regulations for massage therapy businesses to keep them from being used by human traffickers. (Joel Brown, WTVD NEWS, 3/21/18)

Democratic Black Women

Black women have helped carry the Democratic Party to a string of post-2016 election victories, raising hopes of a wave election and a takeover of the House of Representatives in November. "The blue wave is because of the black women," said DD Adams, a Winston-Salem councilwoman who is

running for the Democratic nomination in the 5th District. But the party is still not doing enough to support black women candidates and is taking their votes for granted, according to Adams and Michelle Laws of Chapel Hill, a former executive director of the NAACP's state chapter and a Democratic primary challenger to longtime Rep. David Price.

"There are many black women around this country who are no longer willing to be the mules of the party, doing the hard work on the ground, and receiving very little in return in terms of support and endorsement of the party to serve in key leadership positions," Laws said in a campaign statement. She is a candidate in the 4th District which runs along I-40 from Mebane in the west to Garner in the east. It includes Raleigh, Chapel Hill and Cary.

Wayne Goodwin, executive director of the North Carolina Democratic Party, said his party "has made tremendous gains recruiting African-American women." According to the party, 29 black women are running for the General Assembly in 170 districts. In the last session, there were 12 black women lawmakers, all Democrats. At least four black women -- Adams, Laws, Linda Coleman of Wake County and Rep. Alma Adams, who represents the 12th District in Charlotte -- are running for the U.S. House as Democrats in North Carolina. Alma Adams is the second black woman to represent the state in Congress. Eva Clayton, who served from 1991 to 2003, was the first. (Brian Murphy, McCLATCHY DC, 3/21/18)

Atrium Memo

Atrium Health criticized a firm that provides anesthesiologists to a majority of its Charlotte-area hospitals in a memo to employees Wednesday, the latest in the feud between the two companies. Charlotte-based Atrium sent the memo to about 300 of its area employees to emphasize its previously announced plans to replace the firm, Mednax, with another company. In recent weeks, Mednax "has communicated misleading and incorrect information about our ongoing plans for anesthesia services at Atrium Health," the memo says.

The spat between Atrium and Mednax has spilled into public view since Atrium moved to replace Southeast Anesthesiology Consultants, whose parent is Mednax, with Scope Anesthesia of North Carolina starting in July. As the dispute unfolded, Southeast has taken out full-page ads in the Observer, touting the quality of Southeast's physicians and noting the company has served the community for nearly four decades.

The memo, from Atrium Chief Operating Officer Ken Haynes and Chief Physician Executive Roger Ray, says Atrium is reconfirming that it has rejected a final proposal from Mednax. The move was based on Mednax's refusal to make its services more affordable for Atrium's patients, as well as Mednax's rejection of Atrium's request to allow its anesthesiologists to continue working at Atrium facilities. Employment agreements restrict Mednax anesthesiologists from doing so, Atrium, formerly known as Carolinas HealthCare, has noted. (Deon Roberts, THE CHARLOTTE OBSERVER, 3/21/18)

Gun Violence Marches

Saturday's March for Our Lives Raleigh, a sister of the national event in Washington, D.C., began with a no. "I wanted to go to Washington, D.C., for the march, and my mom said no," said Lauren Smith, a 15-year-old high school sophomore in Wake County. "So I told her I would start my own, and here we are." Smith expects rally and march from City Plaza to Halifax Mall in downtown Raleigh to draw anywhere from 2,000 to 5,000 participants. "We are hoping to bring awareness to the community about gun violence," Smith said. "We also want to put pressure on people in power to push for sensible gun regulations."

March for Our Lives Raleigh, one of more than 800 planned marches worldwide on Saturday, began with an event page on Facebook and an appeal for donations on gofundme.com. It has grown into a march with at least 16 speakers, live music and a host of sponsors, including the NAACP, North Carolinians Against Gun Violence and a number of political candidates.

In Chapel Hill, an anti-gun rally next week is expected to draw students from area universities, as well as speakers from Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Fla. The event, "UNC Rally for Our Lives," is planned for March 29 at 5 p.m. at Polk Place, the main quad at UNC-Chapel Hill. Students from UNC, Duke, N.C. State and Elon universities will take part. Organizers say they expect more than 1,000 people at the event, which will follow this weekend's march on Washington, Raleigh and other cities across the country. The rally will feature speakers from Parkland, including Robert Schentrup, the brother of victim Carmen Schentrup, and two juniors from Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School who survived the shooting. Sarah Chadwick and Jaclyn Corin have been active in the gun control movement pushed by the school's students, appearing on national television. (Scott Bolejack and Jane Stancill, THE NEWS & OBSERVER, 3/21/18)

CMS Fortification

Charlotte-Mecklenburg Superintendent Clayton Wilcox plans to seek about \$9 million in county money to fortify schools with fences, cameras and "hardened" doors, he said this week. The preliminary plan came up at a joint meeting Tuesday between the school board and Matthews town commissioners, who voiced anxiety about the safety of students in mobile classrooms. The thought of a shooter attacking the trailers -- CMS uses about 1,300 to add space at crowded schools -- "really scares me," said Matthews Mayor Pro Tem John Higdon.

Wilcox and school board members sought to assure town officials that they're serious about protecting schools, especially in the wake of recent school shootings in Florida and Maryland. But they said protecting schools is neither cheap nor simple. Fencing a campus, for instance, wouldn't keep someone from shooting into trailers and might make it harder for students to flee if someone were on campus shooting. If someone is armed and determined to do harm, "there's no amount of fencing that's going to stop that from happening," Wilcox said. The exchange highlighted another tension, between transparency and secrecy. When Cyndee Patterson of The Lee Institute, who had interviewed all the participants before facilitating the meeting, disclosed the \$9 million request and asked Wilcox to elaborate, his first reaction was "not with media in the room."

Wilcox later offered a broad outline of his plans, but voiced concern about getting too specific. That's partly because he's early in the budget process, he said, and wants to talk more with county officials and his own board. But he also noted that just this week, a UNC Charlotte student was arrested and banned from campus after threatening a mass shooting. Campus blueprints and evacuation plans were found in the 20-year-old's off-campus apartment. (Ann Doss Helms, THE CHARLOTTE OBSERVER, 3/21/18)

Dam Repairs

After North Carolina environmental officials and engineering consultants warned the town of Lake Lure that its high-risk dam urgently needs repairs, town officials are preparing to spend up to \$5 million on a massive maintenance project, which could get underway this fall. But correspondence to town leaders from the North Carolina Department of Environmental Quality and its predecessor agencies shows years of warnings and requests for information went unanswered. A dam engineering consultant said there is little evidence that the town had performed any necessary maintenance at all on the dam over a long period.

Mayor Kevin Cooley, who took office in January, told Carolina Public Press last week that he credits Town Manager Ron Nalley with taking initiative once he became aware of the issue. Although Cooley said he does not want to criticize previous town officials, he believes it was "fortuitous" that Nalley, who was previously the town manager in Montreat, took the Lake Lure job in 2016 and decided that the town should take concerns about the dam seriously. Cooley, who is a retired civil engineer, said he has reviewed the same records that CPP has and also wonders why no one acted earlier. He said he doesn't know whether making small repairs when they were less urgent over the years would have saved money in the long run. But having to spend so much on one massive project will not be simple and the town is still exploring options, such as bonds.

An obvious concern is that the dam could fail, with horrific consequences for persons and property downstream on the Rocky Broad River, as well as dire economic consequences for a mountain resort community built around the scenic lake the dam created a century ago. However, Cooley said he is confident that there will be no short-term collapse if the town gets to work relatively soon. However, the mayor also understands that residents and property owners are alarmed. "We're trying to be transparent and accurate," he said.

DEQ spokesperson Bridget Munger told CPP that the agency's dam safety specialists are currently reviewing the town's multi-phase repair plans, but initial reviews have been positive. Cooley said he is confident in the plan that the town developed with dam engineering consultant Dan Marks, but the mayor still values having the state sign off on the project before seeking bids. Following an annual dam inspection in early 2015, DEQ Regional Engineer Laura Herbert warned the town of several defects including seepage, cracking and weathering, a propane tank set up too close to the dam and a lack of monitoring for temperature and leak-flow rate.

"During this inspection, we also investigated the potential for property damage and loss of life in the event your dam fails," Herbert wrote. "This investigation determined that failure of your dam could result in serious property damage and loss of life. Therefore, we will continue to list your dam as the 'HIGH hazard' category. This category doesn't mean that the dam is necessarily likely to fail, but that its failure would have serious consequences.

Although Herbert's letter noted that the town had recently taken action on a few items that DEQ had asked for previously, including one set of repairs that had already failed, she also pointed to multiple previous directives from the state going back to 2006 that had gone unanswered. This included hiring an engineering consultant to conduct a more comprehensive visual inspection of the dam every five years and analysis of the dam for its resistance to the small earthquakes that occur with some frequency in the region.

Aiken noted that as the owner of a high-risk dam, the town was supposed to have submitted an Emergency Action Plan by the end of 2015, which was then more than a year overdue. Aiken also referred back to previous requests for action and information in letters the state sent town officials over the previous decade, the same letters mentioned in the 2015 letter from Herbert. The town had still not responded. (Frank Taylor, CAROLINA PUBLIC PRESS, 3/21/18)

Mission Health Merger

Mission Health, the area's largest employer with a sizable footprint in Western North Carolina, has signed a letter of intent to be acquired by Hospital Corporation of America, the organization said in a news release late Wednesday. Mission said its board voted unanimously to execute the letter of intent with the Nashville-based for-profit health care company, which operates 177 hospitals in the United States as well as the United Kingdom. The nonprofit community hospital group said the decision is based on its "long-term vision and commitment to preserve and expand" the organization's quality of care in what it calls "a rapidly consolidating healthcare industry." Mission Health Board Chair Dr. John R. Ball added the board is "confident that HCA Healthcare is the right and best choice for Mission's team members and providers."

"We are extremely excited about this unprecedented opportunity to create an even stronger cornerstone of value, access and quality." (Dillon Davis, ASHEVILLE CITIZEN-TIMES, 3/21/18)

EPA Summit

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency announced it will hold a national conference to look more closely at chemical compounds in water. In May, the EPA will hold a National Leadership Summit, where participants are expected to share information and develop strategies to address public concerns, according to an EPA statement. Among the issues are concerns about PFAS, a category of man-made chemicals used to make products with waterproof properties. The health effects of PFAS are largely unknown. Governors from 56 states and U.S. territories received letters asking to

participate in the conference.

Last June, it became widely known that a chemical known as GenX had been released into the Cape Fear River for years. It has been contaminating drinking water in the Wilmington area. Another unregulated compound known as PFOS has also been found at the Mitchell Water Treatment plant in Greensboro. Greensboro Division of Water Resources Director Steven Drew said they've only experienced one elevated PFOS "spike" a few years ago. (Naomi Prioleau, WUNC RADIO, 3/21/18)

Challenge Withdrawn

The man who had challenged whether Republican legislative candidate Nathan West lives in the district he hopes to represent has withdrawn his challenge. Reynolds resident John Courtland White's action at the beginning of a hearing March 20 before the Buncombe County Board of Elections ends proceedings on the challenge, county elections Director Trena Parker Velez said March 21. White told the board there was inaccurate information in the challenge he submitted earlier this month, Velez said. "He stated that he had not verified that address information and the information he provided on the affidavit was provided by others," she said. West, a former chairman of the county Republican Party, is listed as living in Montreat and is running against Amy Evans in the GOP primary in N.C. House District 115. Rep. John Ager of Fairview is the only Democrat in the race.

White could not be reached for comment Wednesday. Velez said White "did apologize for the inaccuracies and the trouble he had put" people to during the meeting Tuesday. He said last week that he was recruited to file the challenge via "friends of friends" connected to Real Facts NC, a Raleigh-based nonprofit involved in progressive causes. Daniel Gilligan, executive director of Real Facts NC, said Wednesday that, "We were not directly involved in the challenge" and that he had had no contact with White before he filed it.

A March 12 post on Real Facts NC's blog includes a photograph of an envelope sent in late February to the address listed on West's voter registration. It was returned as undeliverable. The post says Real Facts sent letters to the addresses for all candidates for seats in the General Assembly this year and that the Postal Service returned 11. "There may be a perfectly reasonable explanation for" why the mail to West came back, Gilligan said. The fact that mail to so many candidates was returned illustrates problems with the state using that method to purge voter rolls, he said. Conservative groups sometimes ask elections officials to remove voters from the rolls if mail to their listed address comes back as undeliverable. (Mark Barrett, ASHEVILLE CITIZEN-TIMES, 3/21/18)

Confederate Flags

There is a litany of historical moments when the Confederate battle flag has been used to intimidate and harass people of color, Carrboro resident Maya Little said. The flag became popular in the 1950s and 1960s as white segregationists violently attacked civil-rights activists and black people who stood up for their rights, she said. Racist lawmakers used it as a symbol of white supremacy, and neo-Nazis carried it as they marched in Charlottesville last year. "This flag has nothing to do with Southern culture or heritage, and frankly, Southern culture deserves better than it," said Little, a UNC-Chapel Hill teaching assistant and an organizer of the Silent Sam sit-in that opposes the Confederate monument on the university's campus. The Orange County Board of Commissioners agreed Tuesday with Little and others who asked them to limit the size of flags flying on private or public property. No one spoke in defense of the Confederate flag or against creating new rules. "I'm sorry that people aren't here to defend their decision to want to display the Confederate flag because even though I might not agree with them, we're never going to move forward together unless we have the conversation," Commissioner Barry Jacobs said.

County Attorney John Roberts urged the commissioners to approach the issue carefully. Rules that address the content of a flag or single out a particular flag could lead to a lawsuit. "It must be limited to time, place, manner, what lot can have a flag, what size a flag may be and how high a flagpole may be," Roberts said. "Those are content-neutral and would need to be applied to all flags regardless of what a flag is displaying." A change would not immediately affect existing flags, Roberts

said, but those flags would have to comply with the rules later. (Tammy Grubb, THE DURHAM HERALD-SUN, 3/21/18)

Buncombe Gift Cards

The publicly funded credit card for an employee who once worked as former Buncombe County manager Wanda Greene's assistant was used to buy retail cards as early as 2012, according to spending records. Charges on Tiffany Mila White's county-issued card show previously unreported gift card purchases totaling more than \$9,000 over a six-month period. Each of the seven transactions was made in person at Wal-Mart, Target, Staples and Office Depot locations in Asheville, with gift cards usually bought in bulk. Together with more recent transactions, White's card was used to pay for \$52,400 worth of gift cards since one was assigned to her in April 2012. The first gift card purchase -- a single \$1,000 card bought about 3:30 p.m. on a Friday at the Wal-Mart on Bleachery Boulevard -- was made in November 2012.

The county, which has known about questionable gift card transactions for at least as long as the federal investigation into Greene has been public knowledge, has yet to implement changes to its procurement card policy. The U.S. attorney's office confirmed the investigation seven months ago. Officials say they are reviewing policies and will present proposals to commissioners.

Gift card purchases are not against current county rules. But they have caught the eyes of federal investigators and were included under a list of questionable financial transactions singled out in temporarily unsealed court documents obtained by the Citizen-Times. Emails and memos show Greene directed White to buy gift cards in the past, claiming they were given to county commissioners to reimburse them for buying supplies. Commissioners, however, say they never requested nor received the cards. White and another county employee who worked as Greene's assistant, Rachel Norton, also said Greene had their credit card information and regularly used it for purchases, according to court records. The documents said investigators do not know where the gift cards are. (Jennifer Bowman, THE ASHEVILLE CITIZEN-TIMES, 3/21/18)

Property Ruling

Dozens of Cumberland County property owners in the path of the Fayetteville Outer Loop will benefit from three decisions the Court of Appeals issued on Tuesday, said lawyer Neil Yarborough of Fayetteville. "It's a big win," Yarborough said.

The rulings were issued in Forsyth County eminent domain lawsuits that the N.C. Department of Transportation filed to take people's property for the construction of a highway around Winston-Salem. The Court of Appeals on Tuesday blocked the DOT's lawsuits because prior lawsuits between the landowners and the DOT are still ongoing. The prior lawsuits also are about how much the DOT owes them for their property. The issues are the same as in eminent domain lawsuits surrounding the Fayetteville Outer Loop project, Yarborough said. He expects the Fayetteville-area lawsuits to be similarly resolved.

The Forsyth County cases are among numerous lawsuits between North Carolina landowners and the Department of Transportation over a law that was known as The Map Act. The Map Act and lawsuits surrounding it have focused on when and how the DOT can take a person's land and how much it has to pay. The Map Act allowed the state of North Carolina to put development restrictions on land along the route of a highway without purchasing it. It was an attempt to control the purchase costs. It has been repealed. But while it was in place, property owners around the state weren't able to make improvements to their land and had difficulty selling it because of the restrictions. They remained caught in it for years. Eventually, the landowners began suing the DOT, arguing that the state owed them money for the lost value and lost use of their property. (Paul Wolverton, THE FAYETTEVILLE OBSERVER, 3/20/18)

Truliant Wage

Truliant Federal Credit Union said Wednesday it plans to raise its minimum hourly wage to \$15, effective April 2. Truliant said the pay initiative is not related to the federal corporate tax-rate cut, which spurred some corporations, such as BB&T Corp., to redirect some of the tax cut benefits to increase their minimum wage to \$15 an hour. The credit union said the increase represents "an effort to reward and retain current employees, and to ensure wage offerings are competitive" to attract new employees. The initiative represents a response to recently re-evaluating its compensation structure to distribute more benefits in the form of wage increases. Sherri Thomas, Truliant's senior vice president of human resources, said management determined that "attracting and retaining highly talented employees creates a positive member experience." (Richard Craver, WINSTON-SALEM JOURNAL, 3/21/18)

Opioid Lawsuit

The Watauga County commissioners voted unanimously March 20 to join approximately 26 other North Carolina counties in suing the distributors and manufacturers of opioid painkillers. The commissioners were approached at their meeting by attorneys Garry Whitaker of Garry Whitaker Law in Winston-Salem and Michael Fox of Tuggle Duggins Attorneys At Law in Greensboro. Fox said they have been in conversation with Watauga County Manager Deron Geouque and county attorney Tony di Santi for quite some time over the topic. Watauga County agreed to be represented by McHugh Fuller Law Group PLLC in a suit seeking to hold opioid distributors and manufacturers "legally responsible for the wrongful distribution of prescription opiates and damages caused thereby," according to the agreement document. Commissioner Jimmy Hodges clarified that this lawsuit is specifically going after large manufacturers and distributors, not local pharmacies or local doctors. "We're not doing anything that will jeopardize our local health care," Hodges said. (Kayla Lasure, THE WATAUGA DEMOCRAT, 3/20/18)

Panthers Bidder

Multiple sources have told the Charlotte Observer that a steel and mining industry executive has surfaced as the latest potential bidder for the Carolina Panthers, as the sales process heats up. Alan Kestenbaum is chairman and CEO of the private equity firm Bedrock Industries LP, which in June bought a 107-year-old Canadian steel company now called Stelco Holdings. The sources spoke with the Observer on the condition of anonymity because the bidding process is confidential. Kestenbaum, whose interest in the Panthers was first reported by the Observer, could not be reached for comment. Bloomberg also reported Wednesday that the price tag of the franchise has reached \$2.5 billion, prompting another prospective bidder, Philadelphia e-commerce innovator Michael Rubin, to drop out. But sources close to the process said Rubin has made a bid and is still interested in the team at the right price. (Rick Rothacker and Katherine Peralta, THE CHARLOTTE OBSERVER, 3/21/18)

RTP Purchase

A major purchase of an office park near Research Triangle Park, announced Wednesday, underscores the Triangle's continued attraction for investors and businesses. Accesso Partners LLC based in Florida has bought 10 office buildings in Meridian Corporate Center and is interested in buying more in the RTP area. The company didn't disclose the purchase price but, based on recent assessments, the total buy amounts to more than \$100 million. "We've been waiting for the right opportunity to enter this world-class business, research, technology and life sciences center with a major commitment," Ariel Bentata, co-founder of the commercial real estate investment manager, said in a statement the company released. "There is a competitive yet collaborative entrepreneurial environment here, fueled by 16 colleges and universities, rarely found in other U.S. cities."

Accesso bought nine office buildings that are more than 90 percent occupied from a New York City-based institutional investor, and a 10th building from a different seller in a separate deal. In total, the purchase amounted to close to 700,000 square feet of office space in single and multi-story buildings. The company is planning extensive renovations with new amenities, including a conference center, tenant lounge, fitness center and collaborative area. There will also be extensive landscaping improvements. (Craig Jarvis, THE NEWS & OBSERVER, 3/21/18)

Blowing Rock Energy

By a 3-2 vote, the Blowing Rock Town Council on March 13 endorsed a resolution calling on the state and U.S. to transition to 100 percent clean energy by 2050. The resolution was presented by Harvard Ayers, recently retired professor emeritus at Appalachian State University and environmental activist. Ayers is a member of the organizations Climate Voices US, The Climate Times and the North Carolina Climate Solutions Coalition. The resolution states that climate change has increased the global average surface temperature by 1.00 degrees Celsius (1.8 degrees Fahrenheit) since 1880. Ayers talked about the long-term harmful effects of carbon dioxide (CO2) and methane/natural gas (CH4), saying actions must be taken very soon before a "climate catastrophe" happens. (Thomas Sherrill, THE WATAUGA DEMOCRAT, 3/21/18)

Iredell Tech

A technology company is considering Mooresville for its corporate headquarters, which would bring a planned 367 jobs with an average \$110,000 salary to Iredell County. County commissioners on Tuesday approved \$958,000 in tax incentives over the course of a decade for the company, whose identity isn't being revealed until it makes a decision between Mooresville and a site in another state, said Russ Rogerson, executive director of the Iredell County Economic Development Corp. The company will choose a location after a decision from the state on additional incentives, Rogerson said. The Mooresville Town Board on Monday approved more than \$1.1 million in tax incentives over a 10-year period. (John Deem, STATESVILLE RECORD & LANDMARK, 3/21/18)

Pollocksville Police

With a unanimous yes vote the Pollocksville Town Council voted Tuesday to leave vacant the position of police chief, effectively disbanding the department of one, opting instead for law enforcement coverage from the Jones County Sheriff's Office on a one year trial basis. Pollocksville Mayor Jay Bender says, "In terms of there being a presence here, there has not been any since before Christmas, and I think you've heard from the folks here tonight they want to see someone." The position of police chief, which was a part-time 20 hour a week position in the town, was vacated in December 2017. Since then the council has been weighing their options and listening to feedback from the community as both people for and against the decision were given multiple opportunities to weigh in. (WITN NEWS, 3/20/18)

Rocky Mount Motel

The Rocky Mount City Council has postponed a decision on rezoning property at Rocky Mount Mills. Developers want to rezone 5.42 acres located at 20 East Elm St. and an adjacent parcel from residential to business with the only permitted uses being motel, hotel or motor court operations. A public hearing was held Monday regarding the request to turn the property from residential to commercial for the establishment of a collection of "tiny homes" that would function as a motel. After the hearing, the council tabled the item until its April 9 meeting so city staff can amend zoning conditions that would apply to the site. The revised ordinance would cap the density and number of units and ensure a landscape buffer is in place to separate residential and commercial, or unlike uses, as a continuing condition, said Tameka Kenan-Norman, the city's chief communications and marketing officer.

The Mills is proposing that no more than 30 tiny homes be permanently positioned on the site. The homes would be 180 to 240 square feet and positioned in a way that the wheels of the homes would not be seen. Currently, Asheville is believed to be the only city in North Carolina that has something similar; however, the tiny home community there isn't being used as a motel. (Lindell John Kay, THE ROCKY MOUNT TELEGRAM, 3/21/18)

Legislative Studies and Meetings

Items in **RED** are new listings.

LB: Legislative Building

LOB: Legislative Office Building.

More Information: <http://ncleg.net/LegislativeCalendar/>

Thursday, March 22

- 9:30 a.m. | House Select Committee on North Carolina River Quality, 643 LOB.
- 1 p.m. | The Agriculture and Forestry Awareness Study Commission, 544 LOB.

Monday, March 26

- 10 a.m. | The Joint Legislative Program Evaluation Oversight Committee, 544 LOB.
- 2 p.m. | The Committee to Study Rates and Transfers/Public Enterprises (LRC)(2017), 643 LOB.

Wednesday, March 28

- 9 a.m. | Joint Legislative Study Committee on the Division of Local School Administrative Units (2017), 544 LOB.
- 12 p.m. | The Committee on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (LRC)(2017), 544 LOB.
- 1 p.m. | House Select Committee on Implementation of Building Code Regulatory Reform, 1228/1327 LB.
- 1 p.m. | The Committee on Dispute Resolution Options for Homeowners, Associations and Governing Entities (LRC)(2017), 421 LOB.

Tuesday, April 3

- 1 p.m. | The Joint Legislative Commission on Energy Policy, 544 LOB.

Wednesday April 11

- 1 p.m. | The Joint Select Committee on Judicial Reform and Redistricting (2017), 643 LOB.

N.C. Government Meetings and Hearings

Items in **RED** are new listings.

Thursday, March 22

- The North Carolina State Ports Authority Board of Directors meets, North Carolina Maritime Building, 2202 Burnett Boulevard Wilmington.

Monday, March 26

- 7 p.m. | The N.C. Department of Environmental Quality holds a information session on the proposed plan to use North Carolina's share of a national settlement with Volkswagen, Land-of-Sky Regional Council, 339 New Leicester Highway., Suite 140, Asheville.

Tuesday, March 27

- 3 p.m. | The N.C. Department of Environmental Quality holds a information session on the proposed plan to use North Carolina's share of a national settlement with Volkswagen, Kannapolis Train Station, Multipurpose Room, 201 S. Main St., Kannapolis.

Thursday, March 29

- 1:30 p.m. | The Fayetteville State University (FSU) Board of Trustees meets, J.C. Jones Board Room, Chesnutt Library, Fayetteville.

Friday, April 6

- 10:30 a.m. | The state Division of Employment Security holds public hearing on proposed rule changes, North Carolina Department of Commerce, Division of Employment Security, Room A-502, 700 Wade Ave., Raleigh.

Monday, April 16

- 5 p.m. | The N.C. Department of Environmental Quality holds a information session on the proposed plan to use North Carolina's share of a national settlement with Volkswagen, Lenoir Community College, Bullock Building, Room 150, Kinston.

Tuesday, April 17

- 1 p.m. | The N.C. Department of Environmental Quality holds a information session on the proposed plan to use North Carolina's share of a national settlement with Volkswagen, Triangle J Council of Governments, 4307 Emperor Blvd., Suite 110, Durham.

Wednesday, April 18

- 10 a.m. | The NC Alcoholic Beverage Control Commission meets, 400 East Tryon Road, Raleigh.

Friday, April 20

- 9 a.m. | The N.C. Department of Environmental Quality holds a information session on the proposed plan to use North Carolina's share of a national settlement with Volkswagen, Cape Fear Community College, Union Station, Room 512, 502 N. Front St., Wilmington.

Tuesday, April 24

- 9 a.m. | The state Appraisal Board holds public hearing on proposed rule changes, North Carolina Appraisal Board, 5830 Six Forks Road, Raleigh.

UNC Board of Governors

Board Room of the UNC Center for School Leadership Development
140 Friday Center Drive, Chapel Hill (**remote meeting locations in RED**)
More Information: <https://www.northcarolina.edu/bog/schedule.php>

Friday, March 23

- 9 a.m. | The UNC Board of Governors meets, Ballroom C of UNC Wilmington's Burney Center, located on Price Dr., Wilmington.

Friday, May 25

- TBA | The UNC Board of Governors, C.S.L.D. Building, Chapel Hill.

N.C. Utilities Commission Hearing Schedule

Dobbs Building
430 North Salisbury Street
Raleigh, North Carolina
More Information: <http://www.ncuc.commerce.state.nc.us/activities/activit.htm>

Monday, March 26

- Staff Conference

N.C. Dept. of Environmental Quality

The N.C. Dept. of Environment and Natural Resources has a new name - the N.C. Dept. of Environmental Quality. More Information: <http://portal.ncdenr.org/web/guest/home>

Thursday, March 22

- **10:45 a.m. | Secretary Regan to tour Reedy Creek Lab with Members of NC House River Quality Committee, 4405 Reedy Creek Road Raleigh.**

Other Meetings and Events of Interest

Items in **RED** are new listings.

Thursday, March 22

- **11 a.m. | Governor Cooper to deliver remarks at the grand opening of the Greensboro Housing Hub, 1031 Summit Avenue, Greensboro.**

Monday, June 11

- 12 p.m. | Candidate filing for Soil & Water Conservation District Supervisor begins, local county Board of Elections.

Monday, June 18

- 12 p.m. | Candidate filing for all Judicial Offices begins, N.C. State Board of Elections & Ethics Enforcement, 430 N Salisbury St, Raleigh.

Friday, June 29

- 12 p.m. | Candidate filing for all Judicial Offices ends, N.C. State Board of Elections & Ethics Enforcement, 430 N Salisbury St, Raleigh.

Friday, July 6

- 12 p.m. | Candidate filing for Soil & Water Conservation District Supervisor ends, local county Board of Elections.

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